

EXHIBIT D
Michael Stepski Statement

May 22 04 11:19p

As owner and Captain of F/V Ava Claire, I was engaged in hauling gillnets at position 14700. 43600. at around eleven o'clock a.m. I was watching a target on the radar. As it got closer it seemed to slow down. We ~~readied~~ readied a knife, and untied our gillnet bridle, in case we had to flee. At about that time we saw through the thick fog a container ship bearing down on us very fast. I ran into the wheel house, gave it full throttle to get out the way. However it was no use, for it (the ship) was moving too fast, too close. The ship hit us in the center of our starboard side, and cut the boat in half. My two crew members, and myself, stayed on the aft section of our boat yelling up to the ship for help as it steamed by. Our boat sunk, our raft popped up. We got in. The ship was a blue hulled container ship with a ~~very~~ white superstructure.

